

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC HEARING – SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL APPROPRIATION)**

April 18, 2002

6:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Sysyn.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll. There were thirteen Aldermen present.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Guinta, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard, O’Neil (arrived late),
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Thibault, Forest

Absent: Alderman Gatsas

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed Supplemental School Appropriation in satisfaction of Sections 6.04 and 6.05 of the City Charter.

The Clerk presented the proposed Resolution:

“A Resolution providing a supplemental appropriation to the Manchester
School District in the sum of \$480,000 for the Fiscal Year 2002.”

Mayor Baines requested Thomas Donovan to explain the appropriation and then we will proceed with public comments.

School Committee Member Donovan stated this is a request from the Board of School Committee for supplemental appropriation from surplus revenues. The resolution that was approved by the Board of School Committee asked for \$480,000 supplemental appropriation from surplus revenue. We will have a chance at the meeting of the Finance Committee here after seven o’clock to answer your questions from the School Committee about that and we would also be willing to entertain a motion to have the amount of that reduced to \$400,000 as set forth in the letter that I sent to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Mayor Baines advised that the meeting shall be open to public comment; that each person when recognized shall come to the nearest microphone, state their name and address in a clear and loud voice for the record; that each person shall be given one opportunity to speak and comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak.

Keith Hirschmann, 296 Dunbarton Road, Manchester, NH, stated:

What I feel that the process should be is that excess revenues should be certified so that when the school year closes out, factual, excess revenues should be accrued in the next year so that if the School District, which they say they want to have a slush fund they could in fact have a slush fund, so if there are excess revenues that's good, I hope there are and I would hope that they would be approved for the following year. I'm still not happy about maintenance money...hundreds of thousands of dollars that are being used in the School District's operating budget, so I feel if you gave them an appropriation of \$480,000 they technically owe you \$400,000 that they're using of maintenance money. I don't know if they're trying to hide a deficit over there or if they're running a deficit, I don't know why they would need excess revenues to cover their budget this year, they shouldn't need those dollars now. If you were generous enough to give them that appropriation it should be next year. Once those revenues are in fact real, if they are real. Thank you.

Joe Kelly Levasseur, 866 Elm Street, Manchester, NH, stated:

I'm pretty much here more for the new Aldermen on the Board who don't have the history of what happened last year and I do have the tape of the conversation that took place on June 5th and it was pretty hotly debated whether we should transfer the million dollars from the Highway Department which was where they always had it over to the School Board. Now, the reasoning was pretty logical, they decided they would throw a million dollars on top to the School Board so they could get more tuition money from the surrounding towns. Well, if you're a surrounding town and you thought you were going to get \$950,000 towards the maintenance of your schools and then you find out that only \$500,000 went to the maintenance of your schools you're probably demanding to get some of that money back. Now, that would be just a question I would have if I was a surrounding town on this issue. The other issue is that there were four Aldermen that voted very, very strongly against that. We all like the idea of Frank Thomas having that money, we all liked the idea of having that money in a place where the Mayor has constantly and rightly so said Frank Thomas does a great job running his department and is somebody that most Aldermen and the Mayor and turned to for guidance in a lot of issues in the City and they trusted the Highway Department to do what they said they were going to do. Now, if you watch my television show I'll show that conversation, I wish I could have time to play it for you right here and right now, but we kept saying it over and over again...the same three Aldermen that voted against it and Alderman Gatsas was the fourth Alderman and we kept saying it...we don't trust them, we don't trust that they're going to spend the money on what they said they were going to do

and sure enough...it's not good to come here and say that we're right. I'm not happy about that, I'm very disappointed because the biggest thing that everybody has of a complaint is the maintenance of your schools. If you're going to put a million dollars and appropriate that money specifically for those things then you have to spend it the way it is; that is how you build trust with the Aldermen. Well, folks, they took that trust and they flushed it down the toilet. On this tape, Alderman Lopez said I'm giving them my trust, I trust they're going to do that. Now, they burned this Board...he gave them the money and they burned his trust and they burned all of your trust and they burned our trust and I feel that this is not something that should happen again and I think that if you reward them by giving them a supplemental you're doing exactly what they've always been...you're rewarding bad management and don't give them the supplemental and see if they come back with a deficit because they say they don't have a deficit. Now, what I want you all to know is I watched the meeting and it was very important that you notice this...is that a motion was made to give \$9,000 to the Athletic Department and \$6,000 to the Verizon so they could have the graduations (which I think is a good idea to have the graduations at the Verizon)...but, they needed \$6,000 more money. The motion was made to release those funds...Mr. Donovan made an amendment to that motion saying okay, no problem, we'll release those funds but it's got to be tied to the supplemental...the money that they want you to give them tonight. My suggestion to this Board is release the \$15,000, give them the \$9,000 for the athletic budget, give them \$6,000 for the Verizon Center graduations and keep the rest of the money where it belongs. Don't give them a supplemental...teach them right here and right now that they're going to come here and tell you they're going to do something that they have to do it; that is how we can all work together and make this place better if we have some trust between the two Boards. Thank you for your time, your Honor, I appreciate it.

Alderman Pinard moved to refer the Appropriating Resolution to the Committee on Finance for further consideration, with reports to be made to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at a later date. Alderman Thibault duly seconded the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

This being a special meeting, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Forest, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk